



# Fiscal Year 2023 - 2025 Strategic Plan

<b>Executive Summary</b> .....	2
<b>Mission Statement</b> .....	3
<b>Positioning Statement</b> .....	3
<b>Vision</b> .....	3
<b>Core Values</b> .....	3
<b>FY 2023 - 2025 Goals and Strategies</b> .....	4
<b>Goal # 1</b> .....	4
<b>Goal # 2</b> .....	5
<b>Goal # 3</b> .....	6
<b>Goal # 4</b> .....	7
<b>Planning Input</b> .....	8
<b>Glossary of Terms</b> .....	9
<b>Wisconsin Arts Board</b> .....	10
<b>Wisconsin Arts Board Staff</b> .....	10

## Executive Summary

### The Wisconsin Arts Board's Goals:

- Assist Wisconsin communities to thrive by strengthening the state's arts ecosystem and creative industries.
- Champion lifelong learning that inspires imagination, creativity, and innovation.
- Encourage all in Wisconsin to live vibrant, expressive lives by investing in opportunities through which they can connect to the rich heritage of Wisconsin and explore their individual creativity.
- Insist upon competitive resources and smart public policy to ensure that these goals, valued by the public, are achieved.

### Focus:

Celebrating and building upon 50 years of work, the Arts Board's FY2023-2025 strategic plan guides that work from July 1, 2022– June 30, 2025, a time when the COVID-19 pandemic reverberations will continue to affect Wisconsin in general and its arts and culture sector in particular.

During this three-year period, we focus staff, board members, technical assistance and grant dollar resources primarily on the creation and presentation of art and cultural activity, arts education, and community and economic development. We strategically partner with and leverage the resources of other entities within Wisconsin to attain our four goals. Our planning philosophy determines that we keep these goals strong, born of our mission and vision and aligned with our positioning statement, which is **Creativity. Culture. Community. Commerce**. Because our goals must also be grounded in current reality and resources, we have included only those which we have the capacity to achieve and put close to the side those which are aspirational so that we can take them up again when resources allow.

Our work in areas such as *community development, creativity and arts education, diversity, equity, accessibility and inclusion, and the folk and traditional arts* is ongoing. In addition to this work, several initiatives throughout this plan come directly from the intense and ongoing communication that our staff and board have had with artists, arts groups and other partners about their experiences, needs, priorities and creative solutions since March of 2020. They guide our focus and serve as "rallying points" for our resources:

- support for the increased resiliency of Wisconsin's arts ecosystem – including the mental, emotional, physical and fiscal health of its creatives;
- connecting various parts of the arts ecosystem to each other so that artists, arts organizations, and creatives can share the best practices that emerge from the trial and error of their peers as they adapt, evolve, and innovate together over these next three years;
- collaboration with arts organizations, artists, and other creatives, as well as our grantees and state level partners, to communicate the public value of the work that we all provide to our communities and to co-advocate for increased public funding for the arts and creativity in Wisconsin.

This focus guides us in the direction of our vision, which is that the arts are basic to human life, essential to the human spirit, and a wellspring for thriving communities.

**Wisconsin Arts Board**  
*Creativity. Culture. Community. Commerce.*

**Mission Statement**

The Wisconsin Arts Board is the state agency that nurtures creativity, cultivates expression, promotes the arts, supports the arts in education, stimulates community and economic development and serves as a resource for people of every culture and heritage.

**Positioning Statement**

Creativity. Culture. Community. Commerce

**Vision**

The Wisconsin Arts Board vision is inspired by a quote from the late Robert E. Gard, Professor Emeritus of Community Theatre, University of Wisconsin:

"If we are seeking in America, let it be for the reality of democracy in the arts. Let art begin at home and let it spread through the children and the parents, and through the schools and the institutions, and through government. And let us start by acceptance, not negation - acceptance that the arts are important everywhere, and that they can exist and flourish in small places as well as large, with money or without it, according to the will of the people. Let us put firmly and permanently aside the cliché that the arts are a frill. Let us accept the goodness of art where we are now and expand its worth in the places where people live."

We embrace this vision: it guides our belief that the arts are basic to human life, essential to the human spirit, and a wellspring for thriving communities.

**Core Values**

The Wisconsin Arts Board values:

- imagination
- creativity
- curiosity
- diversity, equity, accessibility and inclusion
- freedom of expression
- respect, appreciation, and access for all cultures and all people
- artistic quality
- a broad definition of the arts
- audience and patron development
- community engagement



## Fiscal Year 2023 - 2025 Strategic Plan

### Goals and Strategies

#### Preamble – Goal #1

*The cultural assets in a community form the magnetic force that attracts creative workers and the sustenance that allows them to thrive. Without a strong arts presence, a community can neither breed creative talent nor attract it. That talent and the creative organizations and businesses that employ it are essential to healthy communities and competitive commerce in urban and rural areas alike. By engaging public, private, and nonprofit sectors in Wisconsin's creative, knowledge-based economy, we will stimulate growth, strengthen the impact of artists and arts organizations on regional economies, and expand community innovation and entrepreneurship.*

#### Goal # 1

Assist Wisconsin communities to thrive by strengthening the state's arts ecosystem and creative industries.

#### Strategies

- a. Recognize and support creative industries, defined as those organizations, individuals, and companies whose products and services have their origin in artistic, cultural, creative, and/or aesthetic content, as a critical sector in resilient and sustainable community and regional economic development.
- b. Assert that Wisconsin's artists and creatives are fundamental to Wisconsin's creative economy and must be valued for their work and connected to the resources necessary to build a healthy, resilient, and sustainable practice.
- c. Make clear the important links between creativity and the solutions needed for building sustainable businesses and communities.
- d. Align grants and services with the differentiated needs of Wisconsin's communities that exist all along the spectrum of rural to urban.
- e. Ground all this work in accessible, equitable, diverse and inclusive policies and actions.

### **Preamble – Goal #2**

*Children whose minds are stimulated by an arts-infused education develop discipline, focus, judgment, teamwork, problem-solving skills, attention to detail, and a grasp of the "big picture" more quickly than those who don't... and stay ahead of the curve throughout their school career. With creativity education as core curriculum in our pre-K through 12 schools, we will nurture bold thinkers who work innovatively and take entrepreneurial risks in a fast-changing world – where the model for the school as knowledge factory is as outdated as traditional production models for manufacturing. By encouraging creativity education along the lifespan, we foster creative citizens of all ages.*

### **Goal #2**

Champion lifelong learning that inspires imagination, creativity, and innovation.

#### Strategies

- a. Assist and support artists and arts educators, working in pre-K through 16 and adult education, through grants and services.
- b. Support partnerships between cultural and community organizations that offer out-of-school and multi-generational arts opportunities, particularly those with at-risk youth.
- c. Promote STEAM education, asserting the vital role of Arts education as equally important to Science, Technology, Engineering and Math education.
- d. Sustain our leadership in the work of the National Creativity Network, the Wisconsin Partners in Arts Education, and the Wisconsin Science Festival.

### Preamble – Goal #3

*The benefits of an expressive life are a reservoir of identity and spiritual renewal\* that strengthens everyone. We will further animate the strong relationship between engagement in the arts and quality of life, creative problem solving, community building, and healthy social capital, by encouraging Wisconsinites to experience the artistry of others and to engage in their own creative expressions.*

### Goal # 3

Encourage all in Wisconsin to live vibrant, expressive lives by investing in opportunities through which they can connect to the rich heritage of Wisconsin and explore their individual creativity.

#### Strategies

- a. Provide grants and services that support creative work and cultivate expression.
- b. Help develop, coordinate, and offer thought leadership to networks that leverage talent and resources toward enriching Wisconsin's arts and cultural life.
- c. Maximize broad demographic participation in the Wisconsin Arts Board's programs.
- d. With Wisconsin's arts organizations and artists of color, artists who identify as having physical and cognitive disabilities, and those who come from historically marginalized communities, explore new ways to support and celebrate their work.
- e. Function as the State of Wisconsin's center for information on arts and culture, an initiator of research, and convener of and resource within the state's arts ecosystem.
- f. Advocate and provide technical assistance for cultural equity and accessibility within Wisconsin's arts ecosystem.

\* We thank Bill Ivey, former Chair of the National Endowment for the Arts, for sharing this insight in his preface to Arts Inc.

### Preamble – Goal #4

*The resources and policy must exist to support the goals stated in this plan, so that we accomplish the extraordinary work that its implementation makes possible. Wisconsin must be as strategically positioned to thrive in the future as it deserves to be, ensuring that the quality of the economic, educational, and expressive life of its citizens will be of the highest degree.*

### Goal # 4

Insist upon competitive resources and smart public policy to ensure that these goals, valued by the public, are achieved.

#### Strategies

- a. Ensure that the vital role that creative and social capital plays within healthy communities is understood by local and state leadership.
- b. Work with Wisconsin's arts organizations, artists, and other creatives to increase public funding for the arts and creativity.
- c. Leverage the thought leadership of WI's arts organizations, artists, and other creatives to influence smart public policy.
- d. Foster innovative collaboration between sectors (public, nonprofit, private) to attract and leverage increased investment in the arts throughout the state. This includes small business development support for the arts.
- e. Work with other state agencies, including the Department of Tourism, to build awareness of Wisconsin's considerable, compelling, and competitive artistic assets, and to increase access to the resources of those agencies for arts organizations, artists, and other creatives.
- f. Work with regional arts, economic and service agencies to do the same.

## Planning Input

In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic (November, 2021), the Wisconsin Arts Board began sifting through the input that it had been gathering since the pandemic began (March, 2020), to determine how best to serve WI's arts ecosystem over the next three years – the timeframe for this strategic plan, and a time when the pandemic reverberations will continue to affect Wisconsin in general and its arts and culture sector in particular.

Noting the communities of interest as well as the geographic communities that hadn't yet shared input, the board and staff convened a series of virtual Town Meetings and "check-in" sessions, created an online survey, and engaged in many individual conversations to gather that input as well.

From all of this comes a three-year plan that reflects the diversity of Wisconsin and guides the Wisconsin Arts Board's work in developing and investing resources while deepening capacity, increasing resilience, recognizing emerging arts initiatives, and inspiring participation in and appreciation of Wisconsin's arts and creative sector.

This plan guides the Wisconsin Arts Board's work from July 1, 2022, through June 30, 2025 (Fiscal Years 2023-2025).



## Glossary of Terms

**Creative Economy** - Artists, cultural nonprofits, and creative businesses working together to produce and distribute cultural goods and services that have a positive impact on the economy by generating jobs, revenue, and heightening quality of life.  
*(New England Foundation for the Arts)*

**Creative Industries** – *(The Wisconsin Arts Board thanks the Creative Alliance of Greater Milwaukee for this definition of creative industries.)* Industries such as advertising, architecture, arts and antique markets, culinary arts, crafts, design, designer fashion, film, video and photography, software, computer games and electronic publishing, music and the visual and performing arts, publishing, television and radio.  
*(Creative Alliance of Greater Milwaukee)*

**Expressive Life** - Expressive life is made up of two components: heritage and voice. Heritage constitutes one half of expressive life: the part that is about belonging, continuity, community and history; it is expressed through art and ideas grounded in family, neighborhood, ethnicity, nationality and the many linkages that provide securing knowledge that we come from a specific place and are not alone. Voice, the other half of our expressive life, is quite different: a realm of individual expression where we can be autonomous, personally accomplished and cosmopolitan – a space in which we can, at times, even challenge the conventions of community or family heritage.  
*(Bill Ivey, former chair of the National Endowment of the Arts and Director of the Curb Center for Arts, Enterprise, and Public Policy at Vanderbilt University, from his book Arts, Inc.: How Greed and Neglect Have Destroyed Our Cultural Rights.)*

**Public Value** - The value that a particular product or activity holds for the public; the equivalent of shareholder value in public management.  
The public value {that an organization} seeks to produce, though it may involve economic returns or useful products and services, is different in kind from the value created in and by the private sector. The {organization} creates value by fulfilling its... mission— roughly stated, to make a positive difference in the individual and collective lives of citizens of the {community} through the arts. The degree to which that mission is fulfilled should be measured both quantitatively (how many citizens receive services from the organization?) and qualitatively (what kinds of impact do those services have on the community's members?). Creating the highest-level value, then, means the key task will be to reach as many {community members} as possible in as many places as possible and to affect them as positively and profoundly as possible.  
*(Mark Moore, Hauser Professor of Nonprofit Organizations and faculty director of the Hauser Center for Nonprofit Organizations, from his book Creating Public Value Through State Arts Agencies)*

**Social Capital** - The networks of relationships among people who live and work in a particular society, enabling that society to function effectively. The reduction of all the forms of in-person social intercourse upon which Americans used to found, educate, and enrich the fabric of their social lives undermines the active civil engagement which a strong democracy requires from its citizens. *(Robert Putman Malkin Professor of Public Policy at the Harvard University John F. Kennedy School of Government, from his book Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community.)*

## **Wisconsin Arts Board**

Brian Kelsey, Chairperson, Fish Creek  
John Potter, Vice Chairperson, Hudson  
Lynn Richie, Secretary, Land O' Lakes

La'Ketta Caldwell, Milwaukee  
Jayne Herring, Kenosha  
Karen Ann Hoffman, Stevens Point  
John W. Johnson, Madison  
Leah Kolb, Madison  
Susan Lipp, Madison  
Gerard Randall, Milwaukee  
Mary K. Reinders, Mount Horeb  
Rafael Francisco Salas, Ripon  
Jennifer Schwartzkopf, Oregon  
Matthew Wallock, Madison

### ***Special Thanks:***

*Board Member Alumni Robert A. Wagner of Milwaukee and Kevin Miller of Chippewa Falls served with distinction during the development of this plan and many of its predecessors.*

## **Wisconsin Arts Board Staff**

George Tzougros, Executive Director  
Karen Goeschko, Assistant Director for Programs & Services  
Kaitlyn Berle, Folk and Traditional Arts Specialist  
Dale Johnson, Grants and Information Specialist  
Marie Ackley, 2021-2022 Assistant\*  
Ilka Villarreal, 2021-2022 Assistant\*

*\* Supported through National Endowment for the Arts' American Rescue Plan Act funds*